

How The Question Came Home.

"They are such tiny feet;
They have gone such a little way to meet
The years which are required to break
Their steps to evenness and make
Them go
More sure and slow.

"They are such new, young lives
Surely their newness shrives
Them well of many sins. They see so much
That, being immortal, they would touch,
That if they reach
We should not chide, but teach.

"God help us then to-day
To tenderly, lovingly clear the way
That they must tread,
From needless snares that heartless greed would spread,
And dangerous lures to deadly sin,
Till they grow strong to strive and win."

In the dusk of a summer evening
I rocked my child to rest;
Then sat and mused, with my darling
Still folded to my breast,

His ringlets swept my shoulder,
His breath was on my cheek,
And I kissed his dimpled fingers,
With a love I could not speak.

A form came through the gateway,
And up the garden walk—
And my neighbor sat down as often
To have an evening talk.

She saw me caress my baby
With almost reverent touch,
And she shook her gray head gravely:
"You love that boy too much!"

"That cannot be," I answered,
"While I love our Father more;
He smiles on a mother's rapture
O'er the baby that she bore."

(over)

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For a while we both sat silent,
In the twilight's deeper gray;
Then she said, "I believe that baby
Grows lovelier every day.

"And I suppose that the reason
I feel so drawn to him,
Is because he reminds me strangely
Of my own little baby, Jim."

My heart stood still a moment
With a horror I dared not show,
While the trembling voice beside me
Went on, in accents low :

"Just the same high, white forehead,
And rings of shining hair,
And smile of artless mischief
I have seen my Jamie wear.

"And I've sometimes thought—well, Mary,
The feeling perhaps you guess—
That my trouble would now be lighter
Had I loved my baby less."

My neighbor rose abruptly,
And left me in the gloom,
But the sob of a broken spirit
Was echoing in the room.

And when the lamp was lighted,
I knelt by my baby's bed;
And wept o'er the noble forehead
And the ringlet-crowned head;

For I thought of the bloated visage,
And the matted hair of him
Whom all the village children
Knew only as "Drunken Jim."

And my heart cried out, "O Father,
Spare me that bitter cup!
And destroy the liquor-traffic
Before my boy grows up."

—*Temperance Cause.*

**Remember the Mothers and Boys when you stand
beside the Ballot-Box.**